General Assembly

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Seventieth session
Agenda item 69 (*a*)

Resolution adopted by the General Assembly on 23 December 2015

[*on the report of the Third Committee (A/70/486)*]

70/232. Rights of indigenous peoples

The General Assembly,

Recalling all relevant resolutions of the General Assembly, the Human Rights Council and the Economic and Social Council relating to the rights of indigenous peoples, reaffirming its resolutions 65/198 of 21 December 2010, 66/142 of 19 December 2011, 67/153 of 20 December 2012, 68/149 of 18 December 2013, 69/2 of 22 September 2014 and 69/159 of 18 December 2014, and recalling Human Rights Council resolutions 27/13 of 25 September 2014 [1] and 30/4 of 1 October 2015,[2]

Recalling also Human Rights Council resolution 30/11 of 1 October 2015 on the review of the mandate of the Expert Mechanism on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples,[2]

Reaffirming the outcome document of the high-level plenary meeting of the General Assembly known as the World Conference on Indigenous Peoples, held in New York on 22 and 23 September 2014,[3] in which Heads of State and Government, ministers and representatives of Member States reiterated the important and continuing role of the United Nations in promoting and protecting the rights of indigenous peoples, recalling the inclusive preparatory process for the high-level plenary meeting, including the comprehensive engagement of the representatives of indigenous peoples, and welcoming and reaffirming the commitments, measures and efforts undertaken by States, the United Nations system, indigenous peoples and other actors in its implementation,

Encouraging the active engagement of indigenous peoples in the implementation of the outcome document of the high-level plenary meeting of the General Assembly known as the World Conference on Indigenous Peoples, including at the regional and global levels,

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[1] See *Official Records of the General Assembly, Sixty-ninth Session, Supplement No. 53A* and corrigenda (A/69/53/Add.1 and Corr.1 and 2), chap. IV, sect. A.

[2] Ibid., *Seventieth Session, Supplement No. 53A* (A/70/53/Add.1), chap. III.

[3] Resolution 69/2.

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Welcoming the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development,[4] and stressing the need to ensure that no one is left behind, including indigenous peoples, who will benefit from and participate in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda,

Reaffirming the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples,[5] which addresses their individual and collective rights,

Stressing the importance of promoting and pursuing the objectives of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples also through international cooperation to support national and regional efforts to achieve the ends of the Declaration, including the right to maintain and strengthen the distinct political, legal, economic, social and cultural institutions of indigenous peoples and the right to participate fully, if they so choose, in the political, economic, social and cultural life of the State,

Recalling its decision, in the outcome document of the high-level plenary meeting of the General Assembly known as the World Conference on Indigenous Peoples, to continue at its seventieth session the consideration of ways to enable the participation of indigenous peoples' representatives and institutions in meetings of relevant United Nations bodies on issues affecting them, including any specific proposal made by the Secretary-General in this regard,

Recognizing that violence against indigenous women and girls has a negative impact on the enjoyment of their human rights and fundamental freedoms and constitutes a major impediment to women's full, equal and effective participation in society, the economy and political decision-making,

Expressing concern that, in some cases, indigenous peoples' communities frequently experience suicide rates, in particular among indigenous youth and children, which are significantly higher than among the general population,

Bearing in mind the importance of promoting respect for the rights of indigenous children, in particular combating the worst forms of child labour, in accordance with international law, including relevant human rights law and international labour law obligations,

Bearing in mind also the importance of the empowerment and capacity-building of indigenous youth, including their full and effective participation in decision-making processes in matters that affect them, including policies, programmes and resources, where relevant, that target the well-being of indigenous youth, in particular in the areas of health, education, employment and the transmission of traditional knowledge, languages and practices, and the importance of taking measures to promote awareness and understanding of their rights,

Recognizing the importance of access to justice in the promotion and protection of the rights of indigenous peoples and individuals and the need to examine and take steps to remove obstacles to justice, especially for indigenous women, indigenous youth and indigenous persons with disabilities,

Underlining the responsibility of transnational corporations and other business enterprises to respect all human rights, applicable laws and international principles[6] and operate transparently and in a socially and environmentally responsible manner,

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[4] Resolution 70/1.

[5] Resolution 61/295, annex.

[6] Including the Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights: Implementing the United Nations "Protect, Respect and Remedy" Framework (A/HRC/17/31, annex).

and emphasizing the need to refrain from negatively affecting the well-being of indigenous peoples and to take further action towards corporate responsibility and accountability, including the prevention, mitigation and remediation of human rights abuses,

Recognizing the value and the diversity of the cultures and the form of social organization of indigenous peoples and their holistic traditional scientific knowledge of their lands, natural resources and environment,

Recognizing also the importance of traditional sustainable agricultural practices, including traditional seed supply systems, as well as access to credit and other financial services, markets, secure land tenure, health care, social services, education, training, knowledge and appropriate and affordable technologies, including efficient irrigation, the reuse of treated wastewater and water harvesting and storage for indigenous peoples and others living in rural areas,

Concerned about the extreme disadvantages that indigenous peoples have typically faced across a range of social and economic indicators and about the impediments to their full enjoyment of their rights,

Stressing the need to pay particular attention to the rights and special needs of indigenous women, children, youth, older persons and persons with disabilities, as set out in the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, including in the process of protecting and promoting their access to justice,

Recalling the thirtieth anniversary of the United Nations Voluntary Fund for Indigenous Peoples, in 2015,

1. *Notes with appreciation* the work of the Expert Mechanism on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, of the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues and of the Special Rapporteur of the Human Rights Council on the rights of indigenous peoples, takes note of her report,[7] and encourages all Governments to respond favourably to her requests for visits;

2. *Takes note with appreciation* of the report of the Secretary-General on progress made in the implementation of the outcome document of the high-level plenary meeting of the General Assembly known as the World Conference on Indigenous Peoples,[8] urges Governments and the United Nations system, in consultation and cooperation with indigenous peoples through their representatives and institutions, to continue to implement, when appropriate, measures at the national level, including legislative, policy and administrative measures, to achieve the ends of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples[5] and to promote awareness of it among all sectors of society, including members of legislatures, the judiciary and the civil service, as well as among indigenous peoples, and invites international and regional organizations, within their respective mandates, national human rights institutions, where they exist, civil society, including non-governmental organizations, and other relevant actors to contribute to those efforts;

3. *Reiterates* the commitment of Member States to cooperating with indigenous peoples, through their own representative institutions, to develop and implement national action plans, strategies or other measures, where relevant, to achieve the ends of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples;

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[7] A/70/301.

[8] A/70/84-E/2015/76.

4. *Reaffirms* the decision to convene a high-level event to mark the tenth anniversary of the adoption of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, to be held during the seventy-first session of the General Assembly, in 2017, and that the event will take stock of the achievements of the preceding 10 years and assess the remaining challenges for the rights of indigenous peoples, and also consider the further follow-up to the Declaration, including the consideration of a third International Decade;

5. *Welcomes* the progress in the follow-up action to the World Conference on Indigenous Peoples, including the leadership of the Secretary-General and of the Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs, as the responsible senior official of the United Nations system, in developing, within existing resources, in consultation and cooperation with indigenous peoples, the Inter-Agency Support Group on Indigenous Peoples' Issues and Member States, a system-wide action plan to ensure a coherent approach to achieving the ends of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, raising awareness of the rights of indigenous peoples and increasing the coherence of the activities of the system in this regard;

6. *Encourages* those States that have not yet ratified or acceded to the Indigenous and Tribal Peoples Convention, 1989 (No. 169), of the International Labour Organization[9] to consider doing so and to consider supporting the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, and welcomes the increased support of States for the Declaration;

7. *Urges* Governments and intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations to continue to contribute to the United Nations Voluntary Fund for Indigenous Peoples, the Trust Fund on Indigenous Issues and the United Nations Indigenous Peoples' Partnership, and invites indigenous organizations and private institutions and individuals to do likewise;

8. *Decides* to expand the mandate of the United Nations Voluntary Fund for Indigenous Peoples so that it can assist representatives of indigenous peoples' organizations and institutions to participate in the consultation process on the procedural and institutional steps to enable the participation of indigenous peoples' representatives and institutions in meetings of relevant United Nations bodies on issues affecting them during the seventieth and seventy-first sessions of the General Assembly;

9. *Also decides* to continue observing in New York, Geneva and other United Nations offices every year on 9 August the International Day of Indigenous Peoples, to request the Secretary-General to support the observance of the Day from within existing resources and to encourage Governments to observe the Day at the national level;

10. *Encourages* States to consider including in their reports related to indigenous peoples and women information on the progress made and challenges in the implementation of Commission on the Status of Women resolutions 49/7 of 11 March 2005, entitled "Indigenous women: beyond the ten-year review of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action",[10] and 56/4 of 9 March 2012, entitled "Indigenous women: key actors in poverty and hunger eradication";[11]

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[9] United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 1650, No. 28383.

[10] See *Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 2005, Supplement No. 7* and corrigendum (E/2005/27 and Corr.1), chap. I, sect. D.

[11] Ibid., *2012, Supplement No. 7* and corrigendum (E/2012/27 and Corr.1), chap. I, sect. D.

11. *Also encourages* States to consider including in their national and global reports information related to indigenous peoples on the progress made and challenges in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development,[4] and recognizes in this regard that quality, accessible, timely and reliable disaggregated data will be needed to measure progress and to ensure that no one is left behind;

12. *Underlines* the need to intensify efforts, in cooperation with indigenous peoples, to prevent and eliminate all forms of violence and discrimination against indigenous women, children, youth, older persons and persons with disabilities and to support measures that will ensure their empowerment and full and effective participation in decision-making processes at all levels and in all areas and eliminate barriers to their full, equal and effective participation in political, economic, social and cultural life;

13. *Reaffirms* the importance of effective accountability with regard to violence against indigenous women and girls, including sexual violence, abuse and exploitation, and of undertaking adequate measures to combat such violence;

14. *Stresses* the need to strengthen the commitment of States and the entities of the United Nations system to mainstream the promotion and protection of the rights of indigenous peoples into development policies and programmes at the national, regional and international levels, and encourages them to give due consideration to the rights of indigenous peoples in achieving the goals of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development;

15. *Invites* the Expert Mechanism on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues and the Special Rapporteur on the rights of indigenous peoples to give due consideration, within their mandates, to the rights of indigenous peoples as related to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development;

16. *Encourages* Governments to redouble efforts to combat the worst forms of child labour, both in legislation and in practice, in the context of respect for the human rights of indigenous children, including through international cooperation, as appropriate;

17. *Encourages* States and entities of the United Nations system to strengthen international cooperation, including to address the disadvantages faced by indigenous peoples, and to increase technical cooperation and financial assistance in this regard;

18. *Encourages* the World Health Organization, the United Nations Children's Fund and other relevant United Nations agencies, funds and programmes, in accordance with their mandates, to carry out research and evidence-gathering on the prevalence of suicide among indigenous youth and children and good practices on its prevention and to consider developing, as appropriate, strategies or policies, consistent with national priorities, in cooperation with Member States, to tackle it, including through consultation with indigenous peoples, in particular indigenous youth organizations;

19. *Requests* the President of the General Assembly to conduct, within existing resources, timely, inclusive, representative and transparent consultations with Member States, indigenous peoples' representatives and institutions from all regions of the world, and existing relevant mechanisms of the United Nations, on the possible measures necessary, including procedural and institutional steps and selection criteria, to enable the participation of indigenous peoples' representatives and institutions in meetings of relevant United Nations bodies on issues affecting

them, and also requests the President to prepare a compilation of the views presented during the consultations, including good practices within the United Nations regarding indigenous peoples' participation, which will form the basis for a draft text to be finalized and adopted by the Assembly during its seventy-first session;

20. *Decides* to continue its consideration of the question at its seventy-first session, under the item entitled "Rights of indigenous peoples", and to maintain in the provisional agenda the sub-item entitled "Follow-up to the outcome document of the high-level plenary meeting of the General Assembly known as the World Conference on Indigenous Peoples".

82nd plenary meeting
23 December 2015